

English National Ballet

WORLD PREMIERE of *Creature* by Akram Khan

Sadler's Wells, London

23 September – 02 October 2021

www.ballet.org.uk/creature

English National Ballet has today announced **principal casting** for its new production, ***Creature***, by **Akram Khan** which will receive its much-anticipated world premiere at Sadler's Wells from 23 September – 02 October 2021.

In a dilapidated former Arctic research station, the Creature has been conscripted by a military brigade into a bold new experimental programme. He is being tested for his mental and physical ability to adapt to extreme cold, isolation and homesickness; vital qualities in mankind's proposed colonisation of the 'final frontiers' on earth and beyond.

Creature is an unearthly tale of exploitation and human frontiers inspired by Georg Büchner's expressionist classic *Woyzeck*, with shadows of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Drawing on themes of abandonment, isolation and the fragility of the mind, *Creature* is the tale of an outsider and the search for belonging.

Performing the title role of the Creature are Lead Principals **Jeffrey Cirio** and **Isaac Hernández**, and First Soloist, **Aitor Arrieta**. The role of the Creature's keeper, Marie, will be performed by Lead Principal **Erina Takahashi** who is this year celebrating her 25th anniversary with English National Ballet, Lead Principal **Fernanda Oliveira**, and Artist of the Company, **Emily Suzuki**.

Full principal casting in the order of *Creature*, Marie (the Creature's keeper), **Doctor, Captain, Major, Andres** (the Creature's friend):

Thursday 23 September (Press Night)

Jeffrey Cirio, Erina Takahashi, Stina Quagebeur, Ken Saruhashi, Fabian Reimair, Victor Prigent

Friday 24 September

Aitor Arrieta, Emily Suzuki, Sarah Kundi, Henry Dowden, James Streeter, Rentaro Nakaaki

Saturday 25 September (mat)

Isaac Hernández, Fernanda Oliveira, Emma Hawes, Francesco Gabriele Frola, Joseph Caley, Noam Durand

Saturday 25 September

Jeffrey Cirio, Erina Takahashi, Stina Quagebeur, Ken Saruhashi, Fabian Reimair, Victor Prigent

Tuesday 28 September

Aitor Arrieta, Emily Suzuki, Sarah Kundi, Henry Dowden, James Streeter, Rentaro Nakaaki

Wednesday 29 September

Jeffrey Cirio, Erina Takahashi, Stina Quagebeur, Ken Saruhashi, Fabian Reimair, Victor Prigent

Thursday 30 September (mat)

Aitor Arrieta, Emily Suzuki, Sarah Kundi, Henry Dowden, James Streeter, Rentaro Nakaaki

Thursday 30 September

Isaac Hernández, Fernanda Oliveira, Emma Hawes, Francesco Gabriele Frola, Joseph Caley, Noam Durand

Friday 01 October

Aitor Arrieta, Emily Suzuki, Sarah Kundi, Henry Dowden, James Streeter, Rentaro Nakaaki

Saturday 02 October (mat)

Isaac Hernández, Fernanda Oliveira, Emma Hawes, Francesco Gabriele Frola, Joseph Caley, Noam Durand

Saturday 02 October

Jeffrey Cirio, Erina Takahashi, Stina Quagebeur, Ken Saruhashi, Fabian Reimair, Victor Prigent

Akram Khan said: *“The COVID-19 pandemic hit the UK just weeks before Creature was due to premiere in London last April [2020] and the final stages of our creation and rehearsal process were brought to an abrupt halt as the country went into lockdown. On returning to the studio, I’ve brought the experiences of the last year with me, drawing on themes of isolation, mental health, and patriarchal systems...and within that, I am exploring our very destructive nature of wanting to control everything...man-made systems, nature, animals, fellow humans, our future, and even our past...we want to control it all. And what I am realising is that you can’t control a living thing, without destroying what’s alive about them.”*

Creature is Akram Khan’s third collaboration with English National Ballet and follows the success of *Dust* (performed as part of *Lest We Forget* in 2014), and *Giselle*, Khan’s first ever full-length ballet.

Khan is joined by a brilliant creative team in the creation of this new ballet including Academy Award-winning designer Tim Yip, composer and sound designer Vincenzo Lamagna, lighting designer Michael Hulls and dramaturg Ruth Little.

The postponed international premiere of *Creature* will take place at Chicago’s Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater from 24-26 February 2022.

-ENDS-

English National Ballet is grateful for the generous grant it has been awarded through the Government’s Culture Recovery Fund, which allows it to continue to create, perform and serve its audiences.

For further information, interview requests and images, please contact Alice Lawley, PR Manager, on alice.lawley@ballet.org.uk or 07946541703

Notes to Editors

Credits:

Direction and Choreography: Akram Khan
Original Music and Sound Design: Vincenzo Lamagna
with arrangement by James Keane
Visual and Costume Design: Tim Yip
Lighting Design: Michael Hulls
Dramaturgy: Ruth Little
Assistant Choreographer: Andrej Petrovič
Repetiteur: Mavin Khoo
Rehearsal Director: Nicola Henshall
Sound System Designer: Yvonne Gilbert

A Co-Production between English National Ballet and Opera Ballet Vlaanderen (OBV)
Co-Producer: Sadler's Wells, London Production Partner: The Joan W. and Irving B. Harris Theater
Production Sponsor: Cunard

Listings:

English National Ballet
WORLD PREMIERE of *Creature* by Akram Khan
Sadler's Wells, London
Thursday 23 September – Saturday 02 October 2021
www.ballet.org.uk/creature

The matinee performance of *Creature* on Saturday 25 September will be audio-described, with a pre-show insights talk related to the performance, making the ballet accessible to visually impaired people. Find out more about the Audio Described Performance and Insights Talk [here](#).

English National Ballet is a National Portfolio Organisation supported by Arts Council England.

NatWest is Principal Partner of English National Ballet.

Ballymore is Principal Building Partner of English National Ballet.

English National Ballet is an Associate Company of Sadler's Wells.

About English National Ballet

English National Ballet has a long and distinguished history. Founded in 1950 as London Festival Ballet by the great English Dancers Alicia Markova and Anton Dolin, it has been at the forefront of ballet's growth and evolution ever since.

English National Ballet brings world-class ballet to the widest possible audience through live performances across the UK and on eminent international stages including The Bolshoi Theatre and Palais Garnier; its digital platforms Ballet on Demand and BalletActive; its distinguished orchestra, English National Ballet Philharmonic; and being a UK leader in creative learning and engagement practice, building innovative partnerships to deliver flagship programmes such as English National Ballet's Dance for Parkinson's.

Under the artistic directorship of Tamara Rojo CBE, English National Ballet has introduced ground-breaking new works to the Company's repertoire whilst continuing to honour the tradition of great classical ballet, gaining acclaim for artistic excellence and creativity. 2019 saw English National Ballet enter a new chapter in its history when it moved into a purpose-built state-of-the-art home in east London, Mulryan Centre for Dance, bringing a renewed commitment to, and freedom for, creativity, ambition, and connection to more people, near and far, than ever before.

www.ballet.org.uk

About Arts Council England

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture. We have set out our strategic vision in Let's Create that by 2030 we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high quality cultural experiences. We invest public money from Government and The National Lottery to help support the sector and to deliver this vision.

www.artscouncil.org.uk

Following the Covid-19 crisis, the Arts Council developed a £160 million Emergency Response Package with nearly 90% coming from the National Lottery, for organisations and individuals needing support. We are also one of several bodies administering the Government's Culture Recovery Fund and unprecedented support package of £1.57 billion for the culture and heritage sector. Find out more at www.artscouncil.org.uk/covid19